

4

DTIC FILE COPY

## RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

AD-A217 643

# SOVIET DISCUSSION OF A CADRE-MILITIA SYSTEM

Suzanne M. Crow

DTIC  
ELECTE  
FEB 05 1990  
S B D

A Division of



Hudson Institute

## CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSES

4401 Ford Avenue • Post Office Box 16268 • Alexandria, Virginia 22302-0268

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

Approved for public release;  
Distribution Unlimited

90 02 05 035

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for Public Release; Distribution unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)  CRM 89-164			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION  Center for Naval Analyses		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)  CNA		7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)  4401 Ford Avenue Alexandria, Virginia 22302-0268			7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING ORGANIZATION  Office of Naval Research		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)  ONR		9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER  N00014-87-C-0001	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)  800 North Quincy Street Arlington, Virginia 22217			10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS		
			PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. 65154N	PROJECT NO.  R0148	TASK NO.  WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Soviet Discussion of a Cadre-Militia System					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Suzanne M. Crow					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT  Final		13b. TIME COVERED  FROM TO		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day)  July 1989	
15. PAGE COUNT  16					
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	Arms control, Army personnel (soviet), Disarmament, Foreign policy, International politics, Leadership, Military doctrine (soviet), Military forces (soviet), Military organizations (soviet), National security, USSR, Warsaw pact countries		
05	04				
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)  Soviet military and political leaders are currently engaged in a debate about instituting a cadre-militia system. Such a system would consist of a significantly smaller regular army, manned either by conscripts or volunteers, and a territorial militia based on universal service. Influential military men appear to be divided on how to respond to the prospect of reorganization. Depending upon its ultimate form, the change to a cadre-militia system could severely restrict the Soviet Union's ability to conduct large-scale offensive operations. The discussion will probably continue for some time to come, and its resolution promises to have far-reaching consequences for the security policy of the United States and its allies.					
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED / UNLIMITED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code)		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE



# CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSES

A Division of Hudson Institute 4401 Ford Avenue • Post Office Box 16268 • Alexandria, Virginia 22302-0268 • (703) 824-2000

31 July 1989

## MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION LIST

Subj: Center for Naval Analyses Research Memorandum 89-164

Encl: (1) CNA Research Memorandum 89-164, *Soviet Discussion of a Cadre-Militia System*, by Suzanne M. Crow, Unclassified, Jul 1989

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded as a matter of possible interest.
2. This research memorandum examines the current debate among Soviet military and political leaders about instituting a cadre-militia system. Such a system would consist of a significantly smaller regular army, manned either by conscripts or volunteers, and a territorial militia based on universal service. Influential military men appear to be divided on how to respond to the prospect of reorganization. Depending upon its ultimate form, the change to a cadre-militia system could severely restrict the Soviet Union's ability to conduct large-scale offensive operations. The discussion will probably continue for some time to come, and its resolution promises to have far-reaching consequences for the security policy of the United States and its allies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bradford Dismukes".

Bradford Dismukes  
Director  
Strategy, Plans, and  
Operations Program

Distribution List:  
Reverse page

Subj: Center for Naval Analyses Research Memorandum 89-164

Distribution List

**SNDL**

21A1 CINCLANTFLT  
Attn: N-2  
21A2 CINCPACFLT  
Attn: N-2  
21A3 CINCUSNAVEUR  
Attn: N-2  
A2A OPA  
A6 HQMC INTEL  
A6 HQMC PP&O  
FA2 FICEURLANT  
FB1 FICPAC  
FF42 NAVPGSCOL  
Attn: Captain Tritten  
FF44 NAVWARCOL  
Attn: Dr. Daniel  
FS5 NAVOPINTCEN

**OPNAV**

OP-00K

OP-06

OP-60

OP-603

OP-65

OP-652

OP-81

OP-092

Attn: Dr. Herspring

OP-092BB

OP-09X

# **SOVIET DISCUSSION OF A CADRE-MILITIA SYSTEM**

Suzanne M. Crow

*Naval Warfare Operations Division*

A Division of



Hudson Institute

---

## **CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSES**

4401 Ford Avenue • Post Office Box 16268 • Alexandria, Virginia 22302-0268

# ABSTRACT

Soviet military and political leaders are currently engaged in a debate about instituting a cadre-militia system. Such a system would consist of a significantly smaller regular army, manned either by conscripts or volunteers, and a territorial militia based on universal service. Influential military men appear to be divided on how to respond to the prospect of reorganization. Depending upon its ultimate form, the change to a cadre-militia system could severely restrict the Soviet Union's ability to conduct large-scale offensive operations. The discussion will probably continue for some time to come, and its resolution promises to have far-reaching consequences for the security policy of the United States and its allies.



Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By _____	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

## CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction .....	1
Context of the Discussion .....	1
The Cadre-Militia System .....	2
The Historical Precedent .....	6
Motivation for the Current Discussion .....	9
Initial Reactions to the Discussion .....	11
High-Level Military Reactions .....	12
Conclusion .....	20

## INTRODUCTION

In the shadow of General Secretary Gorbachev's recent proposal for unilateral conventional force reductions, an important discussion is underway in the Soviet Union concerning a complete reorganization of the armed forces along the lines of a cadre-militia system. Such a reorganization could mean the transformation of the Soviet Union's large, conscripted standing army into an armed force consisting of a significantly smaller regular army, manned either by volunteers or conscripts, and a territorial militia based on universal service.

At this writing, there appear to be three opposing sides in the debate. Two of the sides accept the idea of a mixed cadre-militia system but disagree on how to man the cadre army. While one group favors volunteers, the other calls for the retention of universal conscription. The third side in the debate rejects any organizational change for the Soviet military and contends that the present system works best.

## CONTEXT OF THE DISCUSSION

In May 1987, the Warsaw Pact began making conventional disarmament proposals that laid the groundwork for a reduction in the size of the Soviet armed forces and possibly for the establishment of a cadre-militia army. Eventually, the Pact offered a three-phase plan that envisioned, first, the elimination of "the imbalances and asymmetries in individual classes of conventional arms" for each side in Europe.<sup>1</sup> The second phase called for armed forces reduction on each side by "approximately 25 percent (by some 500,000 men) with their organic arms."<sup>2</sup> In the third phase, negotiated reductions would continue and the "armed forces of both sides would be lent a strictly defensive nature."<sup>3</sup> Throughout these phases, "lowered-arms level strips (zones) would be created along the line of contact between the two military-political alliances" to keep military potentials "at a level ensuring only defensive capability but ruling out the possibility of a surprise attack."<sup>4</sup>

Gorbachev's December 7, 1988 announcement of unilateral conventional cuts, withdrawal of assault troops, and reorganization of existing forces in the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, when implemented, will mark significant progress toward achieving the goals of the Warsaw Pact proposal. These reductions, while not a formal part

---

1. "Warsaw Pact States' Statement on Talks on Armed Forces and Conventional Arms Reduction in Europe," *Pravda*, 16 July 1988, p. 1. Translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 18 July 1988, p. 13.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 14.



of the negotiations, do represent a start toward reducing the Warsaw Pact's conventional superiority.

It is probably the overall goal of the Warsaw Pact proposal -- that of eliminating the possibility of mounting offensive operations or surprise attacks -- that has motivated the Soviet leadership to consider a cadre-militia system. The first indication from the top leadership that the terms of military service might be changed came from a statement by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze in October 1988. He said that

...the press is asking questions about the length and efficacy of military service. I am convinced that the new Supreme Soviet will examine this question.<sup>5</sup>

Gorbachev echoed this sentiment during his remarks at the November 1, 1988 Komsomol rally:

In general, the question of service in the army and the call up must be analyzed well. I feel that the question of the length of military service is arising. It might be changed.<sup>6</sup>

These statements by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze are sufficiently vague to be compatible with either a complete reorganization of the Soviet military or a mere reduction in its size. Indeed, the statements by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze, rather than amounting to a promotion of any specific ultimate form for the Soviet armed forces, seem more like an official sanction for further discussion and debate.

#### THE CADRE-MILITIA SYSTEM

The first detailed discussion of the cadre-militia system appeared in the September 1988 issue of the magazine *Twentieth Century and Peace* during a roundtable discussion. The participants in the discussion included representatives of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy (MPA) and officers from the Lenin Military-Political Academy, the principal institution for the training of

---

5. Shevardnadze interview by K.S. Karol in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Paris, 14-20 October 1988, pp. 34-36.

6. Mikhail S. Gorbachev quoted in "Perestroika and Youth: Time of Action," *Pravda*, 1 November 1988.

political officers.<sup>7</sup> Also taking part in the discussion were representatives of civilian think tanks such as the Institute of the USA and Canada, the Institute for World Economics and International Relations (IMEMO), two lesser known institutes concerned with the humanities, and the journal *International Affairs*, an organ of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>8</sup>

The subject of developing a cadre-militia system emerged from the broader question of how the Soviet armed forces should be organized. Gen.-Maj. N. A. Chaldymov of the MPA broached the subject by stating that

It is very important to correctly define the general concept of reform of the Soviet Armed Forces. Will our army continue to be a mass regular army, will it be structured on the militia principle, or will it perhaps become a cadre-militia army? Clearly these problems could become a subject for discussion.<sup>9</sup>

The manner in which Chaldymov framed the question reveals that the notion of a cadre-militia system represents a compromise between the alternatives of maintaining the current large army and shifting to a much smaller regular army.

Further evidence that the cadre-militia system represents a compromise is offered by the contributions of Lt. Col. A. Savinkin, also of the MPA. Savinkin rejects the idea of simply moving toward an entirely professional army. He argues

I don't think it correct to call for creation of a small professional army. Aside from the fact that such an army will be cut off from the people, it will not ensure the defense of our vast territory, even using the threat of nuclear retribution.<sup>10</sup>

---

7. It should be remembered that the MPA is not only a chief directorate in the armed forces but also a section of the Central Committee of the CPSU. In other words, while officers of the MPA are members of the Soviet military, their allegiance is to the party rather than to military science.

8. *International Affairs* has recently been taken over by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has gained a reputation for espousing views in line with the Soviet Union's "new thinking."

9. "Army and Society," *Vek XX i mir*, September 1988, p. 22.

10. Ibid.

Savinkin goes on to say that

...often behind discussions of a professional army is the desire not to raise the quality of the army system, but to abandon the principle of universal military obligation...<sup>11</sup>

In another publication, Savinkin defines the cadre-militia army as

...a relatively small, high-tech equipped, professionally trained and manned, predominantly volunteer cadre military organization, supported by a broad network of territorial-militia formations.<sup>12</sup>

On the subject of the militia, Savinkin states that significant military strength can be raised in a short time when necessary, and that a wide network of territorial-militia formations will be supported by a small cadre nucleus, as described above, in peacetime.<sup>13</sup> This recalls the territorial-militia system used by the Soviet Union during the 1920s and early 1930s.

#### THE HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

The use of a cadre-militia system is not without precedent in Soviet history. Following World War I and the Soviet Union's Civil War, the regular Soviet armed forces were demobilized from a peak figure of 5.5 million men in 1920<sup>14</sup> to 562,000 in 1923.<sup>15</sup> In conjunction with this demobilization, the Soviet leadership took measures to reorganize the armed forces. Initially, the leadership envisioned the creation of a territorial militia system as the sole basis for its armed forces. Indeed, at the Ninth Party Congress in 1920, the decision was actually taken to transform the Red Army into such a system.<sup>16</sup> This resolution reflected the influence of Trotsky, who favored the territorial militia on ideological and economic grounds.<sup>17</sup>

---

11. Ibid.

12. Aleksandr Savinkin, "The Kind of Army We Need," *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 45, 6 November 1988, p. 6.

13. "Army and Society," *op. cit.*, p. 24.

14. Michael Garder. *A History of the Soviet Army*. Washington: Praeger, 1966, p. 58 n.

15. D. Fedotoff White. *The Growth of the Red Army*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944, p. 188.

16. Roman Kolkowicz. *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1985, p. 44.

17. White, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

Trotsky's idea was opposed by members of the military led by Frunze, who feared the potentially adverse effect of the territorial militia system on military professionalism. During 1920 and early 1921, various events conspired to make a case for maintaining at least a small professional cadre, and, at the Tenth Party Congress (March 1921), it was resolved that the transition to a strict territorial militia system would not be prudent.<sup>18</sup> By 1923, the Trotsky and Frunze plans were combined to achieve a cadre-militia system.<sup>19</sup>

The cadre-militia system, while nominally a compromise between the plans of Trotsky and Frunze, was actually a victory for the latter. As originally organized, the cadre consisted of a 562,000-strong regular standing force including the entirety of naval and air force personnel.<sup>20</sup> Among the ground forces, the cadre accounted for two-fifths of the infantry and artillery, four-fifths of the cavalry, and all of the technical personnel (air force, tank and armored-car units, engineers, signal service troops, etc.)<sup>21</sup> Cadres who served in the territorial units numbered from one-tenth to one-sixth of the unit's total strength.<sup>22</sup> As is evident from these statistics, the well-trained cadre controlled the more elite sectors of the military establishment while relegating most of the unskilled foot soldiers to the militia.

In terms of ground forces manpower, the militia, as initially organized, maintained numbers superior to the cadre. By the early 1930s, however, manpower began to shift from the militia to the regular army. For example, the 1930 militia was larger with 41 infantry divisions compared to 31 for the cadre army.<sup>23</sup> However, by 1936 this trend was reversed, with the cadre assuming 77 percent of all divisions.<sup>24</sup>

The trend toward reducing the role of the territorial militia culminated in 1939 with the ruling by the Eighteenth Party Congress that the territorial militia system be abolished.<sup>25</sup>

A more recent discussion of reinstituting a cadre-militia system occurred in the early 1960s. Khrushchev talked of resurrecting the territorial militia, but nothing ever came of his idea.<sup>26</sup>

---

18. Ibid., p. 188.

19. Garder, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

20. White, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Garder, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

24. White, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

25. Ibid., p. 359.

26. "The Kind of Army We Need," *op. cit.*

## MOTIVATION FOR THE CURRENT DISCUSSION

A number of factors seem to be motivating the current proponents of reinstituting a cadre-militia system. While perhaps the most obvious factor to recommend the cadre-militia system is its low cost, Soviet commentators do not usually cite savings as a factor motivating the change.

Savinkin avoids the question of saving money by citing all manner of arguments to recommend the cadre-militia system. He goes so far as to contend not only that this system is more suitable for the current international climate but that it would have been more effective for fighting the Germans in World War II. He argues that the Soviet Union's standing army allowed fascist troops to advance toward Moscow and resulted in great losses over the course of several months. Furthermore, Savinkin maintains that successive improvements in the cadre-militia system would have, "if not prevented fascist aggression, then guaranteed its repulsion in a shorter period of time and with significantly fewer losses."<sup>27</sup> While Savinkin's judgments may be sincere, he would probably have difficulty finding a military scientist in either the East or the West who would be willing to concur with his views. What is more noteworthy, perhaps, is the fact that he feels the need to defend the military utility of the cadre-militia system.

In addition to justifying the re-establishment of a cadre-militia army on the basis of its military efficacy, its compatibility with Marxism-Leninism is also invoked to bolster the case. Maj. M. A. Smagin suggests that the discussants

apply the x-ray of historical truth to the whole concept of a regular mass army and consider the extent to which this concept is Marxist. It is not ruled out that it is a Stalinist modernization, since the regular mass army most corresponds to that political regime from whose rudiments we are now freeing ourselves. And if you object, saying that V.I. Lenin talked about a mass army, well, he was speaking of an army waging war, a wartime army.<sup>28</sup>

Savinkin concurs with the view that a large standing army is not in keeping with the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. He notes that the mass army of the Civil War period was viewed as a transitional type of army that anticipated a class militia and then a general militia.<sup>29</sup>

---

27. "The Kind of Army We Need," *op. cit.*

28. "Army and Society," *op. cit.*, p. 23.

29. *Ibid.*

Savinkin further notes that the absence of an immediate military threat makes the time ripe for reinstituting a cadre-militia system.<sup>30</sup> In this regard, during the *Twentieth Century and Peace* panel discussion, A. B. Pankin, Deputy Chief Editor of *International Affairs*, asked

How probable is a big war? ...What's more, one need only look at the ideological-political state of Western societies to see that practically no one there wants to wage large, predatory wars...<sup>31</sup>

Finally, proponents of the cadre-militia system cite its compatibility with the Warsaw Pact's current movement toward a defensive military doctrine and advocacy of conventional arms control. Savinkin notes that the current military structure, regardless of the Soviet Union's political intentions, can be perceived as a potential military threat to other nations.<sup>32</sup> Unlike the large permanent structure currently in place, a cadre-militia army would "flexibly react to the dynamics of disarmament and likewise to the growth (reduction) of a military threat."<sup>33</sup>

#### INITIAL REACTIONS TO THE DISCUSSION

Public reaction to the concept of a cadre-militia system has been mixed. In late January, *Moscow News* followed up on the Savinkin article with three letters to the editor -- two in favor of the change and one opposed.<sup>34</sup> Also in late January, *Communist of the Armed Forces* printed a series of essays, solicited by the journal, which reacted to the Savinkin article. These were published under the title, "The Danger of Aggression Still Exists."<sup>35</sup> Of the seven essays, five expressed unalloyed opposition, one showed limited support and one simply noted factual errors within Savinkin's article. The most frequently cited reason for opposing the establishment of a cadre-militia system was the existence of a military threat from the West and the ineffectiveness of a cadre-militia system to meet that threat.

It is significant to note that the contributors to the publicized debate, at first, included only civilians and political-military officers. Professional military men (i.e., those with military-technical backgrounds as opposed to military-political) began to comment publicly on military reorganization only in January 1989, some four

---

30. "The Kind of Army We Need," *op. cit.*

31. "Army and Society," *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

33. "The Kind of Army We Need," *op. cit.*

34. "Letters to the Editor," *Moscow News*, No. 4, 29 January 1989, p. 4.

35. "The Danger of Aggression Still Exists," *Kommunist Vooruzhenikh Sil'*, No. 2, January 1989, pp. 18-25.

months after the initial discussion of re-establishing the cadre-militia system. The comments of the first military scientists to break the military's silence on the cadre-militia system reveal that professional soldiers themselves may be divided on whether to accept or reject the system.

#### HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY REACTIONS

In an interview with the newspaper *Soviet Russia*, former Chief of the General Staff Sergei Akhromeyev voiced his opposition to instituting the volunteer principle in the armed forces on the grounds that it would be "unacceptable for the Soviet Union."<sup>36</sup> He noted that volunteer systems exist in some countries "owing to their specific geographical location" and "only during peacetime."<sup>37</sup> In Akhromeyev's view, "all citizens should be prepared to defend the Motherland" and a "hired army would cost our people much more than the army does now."<sup>38</sup>

In February 1989, Akhromeyev's successor as Chief of the General Staff, Gen.-Colonel Mikhail Moiseyev, expressed his opposition to the notion of an all-volunteer army as well as that of a territorial militia. According to reportage in *Red Star*, Moiseyev attacked each of these concepts during a February 8 meeting of "communists of the General Staff." Moiseyev stated:

Opinions are being widely circulated that we need to cut the army by 50 percent on a unilateral basis. Change to a territorial militia system of manpower. Create a professional, but essentially a hiring army. The fact is ignored that in modern, complex conditions of battle, a militia system is absolutely impracticable, and the change to a professional hired army is connected with a sharp increase in expenditures for its maintenance, at least by 5-8 times. Naturally, these detailed proposals are unacceptable, and our attitude toward them must be unambiguous [odnoznachnym].<sup>39</sup>

What stands out about Moiseyev's arguments is his failure to address the use of a combined cadre-militia system. Such a combined system would presumably offset some of the drawbacks cited by Moiseyev. It should also be noted that even the most ardent advocate of

---

36. Sergei Akhromeyev interview by Stanislav Kosterin, "The Army and Perestroika," *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, 14 January 1989, p. 1.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. "From the Position of a Defensive Doctrine," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 10 February 1989, p. 1.

the cadre-militia system, Lt.-Col. A. Savinkin, himself rejects the isolated use of either a professional army or a territorial militia.

In April 1989, a more detailed look at the military's thinking was provided by Soviet Defense Minister Dmitrii Yazov. In a lengthy article carried by *Red Star*, Yazov cites several drawbacks to maintaining either a militia or a professional army. He rejects the militia because it would create "the objective preconditions for...pitting narrowly conceived national interests against statewide, international interests."<sup>40</sup> The militia is also unacceptable because its "combat readiness will not accord with modern requirements" and its territorial organization ensures that troops will be placed near their homes rather than near the enemy.<sup>41</sup>

Yazov also rejects a fully professional army. He argues that it is a "still heavier burden on the economy."<sup>42</sup> Yazov also tries to create the impression that a professional soldier is not politically reliable: "...readiness to serve is made directly dependent on the size of the pay..."<sup>43</sup> Finally, and most important from a military standpoint, Yazov notes:

In contemporary conditions, a professional army, because of the limited size of the reserves trained...is incapable of waging protracted military operations....<sup>44</sup>

The best system, in Yazov's view, is the use of an army based on universal military obligation, implemented on an extraterritorial basis. Yazov even claims that

...a cadre army manned on the basis of a universal military service obligation is not inferior to a professional army and in terms of a number of parameters of activity is actually superior to it.<sup>45</sup>

In sharp contrast to Yazov's negative remarks, there is evidence to suggest some in the high command may be ready to compromise. In a May 1989 interview with the Soviet weekly, *Government Herald*, Moiseyev was

---

40. D. T. Yazov, "On the Basis of New Thinking," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 10 February 1989, p. 1.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.



asked about the ideas currently circulating in the Soviet press about establishing a professional army. Moiseyev offered the following analysis:

At the Ministry of Defense, the question has been thoroughly studied and researched from all angles: economic, military, socio-political.... First I will note that in general the number of volunteers in the Soviet Army and Navy...amount to about 35 percent. From the military point of view, of course, the level of professional training and education of Armed Forces personnel working on the basis of long-term (20-25 years) and short-term (3-6 years) contracts is significantly higher than that of personnel drawn on the basis of universal military conscription with far shorter periods of service (2 years). However, there is a serious flaw in volunteer [professional] service: the capacity to accumulate reserves -- necessary for deploying the Armed Forces under the mobilization plan -- is reduced by a significant measure.

Because of that [flaw], the most acceptable option is the mixed system of manning the Armed Forces used in the armies of the FRG, France and, actually, in the USSR as well.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the fact that Moiseyev starts off by rejecting a professional, volunteer army, he is significantly less hostile to the idea than in previous comments.

He is prepared to grant that long-service professionals constitute a more effective fighting force than short-term conscripts, and he acknowledges that currently more than one-third of the Soviet military is professional. However, on balance he still favors conscription. Moiseyev's chief complaint with the idea of a professional military is that it does not generate sufficient numbers of trained reserves. Only through short-term conscription can an adequate supply of trained reserves be maintained.

Unlike in his previous remarks, Moiseyev is now prepared to accept the so-called *mixed system* (*smeshannaya sistema*) of manning the armed forces. The usage of the term in the Soviet military press and in the

---

46. "Soldiers Take Off Their Great-Coats," M. A. Moiseyev interviewed by V. Belyaev, *Pravitel'stvenniy vestnik* No. 9, May 1989, p. 5.

more authoritative *Soviet Military Encyclopedia* implies that it refers specifically to the concept of a cadre-militia system. For example, in describing the shift to a cadre-militia system, the *Encyclopedia* states:

The armed forces of the Soviet state completed the transformation to a cadre structure after the Civil War. ...In 1924-1925, the cadre system was adapted for combination with a territorial militia.... Such a mixed system for developing the Soviet Armed Forces allowed for the maintenance of the minimum necessary quantity of troops.... In the 1930s, under the circumstances of an impending threat of war, the mixed system ceased to meet the requirements for a reliable defense of the country. (Emphasis added)<sup>47</sup>

Given the highly specific meaning of the term *mixed system*, Moiseyev's use of the term strongly implies that he is referring to a cadre-militia system. His contention that the mixed system is the best option therefore leaves the impression that he would favor a cadre-militia system, provided the cadre portion would be recruited through short-term conscription rather than through voluntary enlistment.

Moiseyev is not the only military scientist to accept the cadre-militia proposal. In a recent interview, Army General Vladimir Lobov supported Moiseyev's view that a regular army should be recruited by conscription.

What an army should be like and how it should develop depends [sic] only to a small degree on our will. The chief factors here are the economy, the level and nature of the threat of war (real, not imaginary), and political, ideological, and other realities. And these are such that today we cannot abandon a regular, mass army and compulsory military service.<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, he seems to favor the establishment of a militia to go along with the cadre army. In a historical work published earlier this year, Lobov expressed particular interest in the military thought

---

47. *Sovetskaya Voennoye Entsiklopediya*, vol. 4. Moscow: Voennoye Izdatelstvo, 1980, p. 24. See definition for *kadrovaya sistema*.

48. V. N. Lobov quoted in, "And Only the Truth Will Do," *Izvestia*, 9 May 1989, pp. 1, 3. Translated in *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 11 May 1989, p. 85.

of the 1920s and 1930s, and highlighted a 1923 work by B. M. Shaposhnikov on the relation of politics and strategy. He notes approvingly that Shaposhnikov

...expresses support for the militia character of the army, believing that "in our times we must consider the militia army a permanent factor in a future struggle, not an exception or an indication of a state's weakness."<sup>49</sup>

Lobov's selection of a statement advocating the use of a militia -- especially one which points to its perennial viability and necessity -- can be taken as a vote in favor of a militia army today.

Shortly after the publication of his article, Lobov was given his fourth star and promoted from First Deputy Chief of the General Staff to the post of Chief of Staff of the Warsaw Pact. Because it is difficult to believe that Lobov genuinely favors the creation of a militia, the appearance of his article around the time of his promotion invites some speculation. It may be the case that Lobov's expression of support was simply a gesture designed to please his political superiors. But this in turn implies that there is high-level political pressure behind the advocacy of the cadre-militia system. Such an inference is logical, but still speculative at this writing.

A third military figure with impressive credentials has also spoken out implicitly in favor of the *mixed system* of manning the armed forces. Retired Gen.-Maj. V. Larionov<sup>50</sup>, a consultant at the Institute of the USA and Canada, recently offered a historical analysis of the Soviet armed forces' development.

The young nation's life having been dislocated by the Civil War, the government adopted the most economical, mixed pattern of the military establishment (a combination of a standing army and territorial militia units).... This...laid the guidelines for a long time to come in improving the battleworthiness of the

---

49. V. N. Lobov, "Topical Questions on the Development of the Theory of Soviet Military Strategy in the 1920s and 1930s," *Voenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal*, February 1989, p. 43.

50. Larionov has also distinguished himself as a contributor to and composing editor of all three editions of the well-known Soviet text, *Military Strategy*, and he has chaired the Department of the History of Wars and Military Art at the Academy of the General Staff. See Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott. *The Armed Forces of the USSR*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1984, pp. 93, 386.

Soviet Armed Forces at the lowest possible cost.... Today's efforts to achieve a breakthrough in the country's development are, to some extent, reminiscent of the situation in those days. Relying on a small-size regular core, the mixed establishment could train reserves without actually separating the conscripts from their jobs and homes.

The mixed approach...was quite adequate to the country's needs in the calm atmosphere the world lived in at the time. (Emphasis added)<sup>51</sup>

Larionov is clearly advocating the *mixed approach* for the Soviet Union today. He identifies circumstances currently in play in the Soviet Union (the need for economy, the calm world climate) which equate to the situation of the 1920s when the cadre-militia system was adopted.

On the pivotal issue of how to man the cadre, Larionov does not specify his preference. Because he embraces without qualification the particular mixed system of the 1920s -- which included voluntary recruitment for the cadre -- he may favor the same for today. On the other hand, because Larionov does not explicitly support voluntary recruitment, it is possible that he, like Moiseyev and Lobov, favors a mixed system based on universal service.

#### CONCLUSION

Although the debate about reorganizing the Soviet military may still be far from complete, certain conclusions can be drawn. There appears to be a continuum of ideas about reorganizing the Soviet military ranging from proposals for creating an entirely professional army to calls for a maintenance of the present system. Such a volume of discussion predicts that some change is in the offing.

The mere discussion of establishing a cadre-militia system encourages the impression that the Soviet leadership is in the process of abandoning preparation to fight a full-fledged conventional war as a primary option for its standing army. The militia would probably constitute the bulk of the ground troops under a cadre-militia system, and these forces would also be the least trained and least skilled of all military personnel. Given the importance of ground forces to conventional war planners, the cadre-militia system's de-emphasis of ground force training and readiness makes it a system much less suitable for fighting a conventional war.

---

51. V. Larionov and A. Kokoshin, "Soviet Military Doctrines," *Soviet Union*, March 1989, pp. 12-13.

Apparently the Soviets share this assessment. Advocates of a cadre-militia system acknowledge that the system is designed for a peacetime environment and point to the stability of the international climate as a factor conducive to establishing a cadre-militia system.

The obverse of this argument is made by the system's detractors: the majority of them cite the persistence of a military threat from the West as the chief reason for retaining the present system. This school of thought seeks to maintain the protracted conventional war option, and to do this it is essential to maintain a regular army manned on the basis of universal military service.

While the cadre-militia system would impose restraints on the Soviet Union's conventional war option, it would have a much more limited effect on their nuclear options. There has been no detailed discussion of the prospective division of labor between the cadre and the militia, but one might anticipate that the Soviet leadership would entrust the staffing of the navy, air force, strategic missile troops, air defense troops and missile troops of the ground forces overwhelmingly to the cadre army. As pointed out earlier, the cadre-militia system used in the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s saw virtually all skilled forces manned by professionals with the militia made up of infantrymen. A passage from Frunze emphasizing this division of duties was quoted by Savinkin, suggesting that he might favor the same for today.

Given the far-reaching implications of the change to a cadre-militia system -- from its strategic nuclear effect to its effect on the management of military training and staffing -- one would assume that the Soviet leadership would not commit itself to such a change lightly. The discussion will probably continue for some time to come, and its resolution promises to have far-reaching consequences for the security policy of the United States and its allies.